A

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT,

PERFORMED BY

A SOCIETY of GENTLEMEN in Edinburgh,

Upon the Anniverſary of the BIRTH-DAY of

JAMES THOMSON,

Author of the SEASONS, &c.

SEPTEMBER 22.

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BRITISH MUSEUM
MAY

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MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT,

PERFORMED

Upon the Anniverſary of the BIRTH-DAY of JAMES THOMSON.

OVERTURE.

RECITATIVE.

COME ye whom Nature charms, O hither come!
And from the flowing ſoul, with grateful hearts,
While muſic wakes around, to THOMSON raiſe,
Too long with-held, the tributary lay.

Shall he alone, whoſe gen'rous muſe rejoic'd
Fame to beſtow?—Shall he alone, who ſtrew'd,
With ev'ry ſweeteſt flow'r, the virtuous grave?
Shall Nature's fav'rite Bard, whoſe kindling ſoul
The flame of Genius fir'd? Shall he alone
Remain unhonour'd? Gratitude forbid.

But where ſhall we begin? what numbers find,
To ſing the fair creation of his pen?

How eaſe the lab'ring breaſt that panting burns
To raiſe the ſong of gratitude and praiſe?
Weak is all praiſe—all numbers but his own.
For who can paint like him? Nature herſelf,
As in her vaſt Lyceum forth he walk'd,
And ſhot a raptur'd glance from earth to heaven,
Her ready pencil, to his ſkilful hand,
Delighted gave.—The ſame ſhe whilom gave,
The Mantuan ſwain, as wand'ring in the ſhades
Of ſoft Parthenope, of *her* he ſung.

Come ye whom Nature charms, O hither come!
And, from the flowing ſoul, with grateful hearts,
While muſic wakes around, to THOMSON raiſe,
Too long with-held, the tributary lay.

AIR.

Beſt of all the tuneful throng!
Sweeteſt lays to thee belong;
While we give the feſtive day,
Grateful honours may we pay.

Round thy cradle, ſure the Nine
Led the choral dance divine;
While they ſung, (and ſinging ſhed
Bleſſings on thy hallow'd head)

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" Happy,

" Happy, happy, happy child!
" On whoſe birth great Nature ſmil'd.
" Heaven-born poet! thus we ſhower
" Influence o'er thy natal hour.

" Round thy cradle, ſee the Nine
" Lead the choral dance divine!
" See, with us, the Graces three
" Wreathe the ſweeteſt flowers for thee."

RECITATIVE.

How ſweet with thee, bleſt Bard! when *Spring* deſcends,
Etherial mildneſs on the bluſhing plains,
To daſh the dew-drops from the ſweet-brier hedge;
To gather in their prime freſh-blooming flowers;
To ſmell the bloſſom'd bean-field, purple heath,
And, ſcatter'd wild, the lily of the vale;
Or careleſs thrown beneath the wood-land choir,
To liſten to thy muſe's varied ſong;
Whether ſhe paints the happy, golden age,
Or touches light the Pythagorean lyre,
Or of the *mighty breath*, enraptur'd ſings,
Inſpiring now the " Paſſion of the groves,"
And now the charming " agonies of love;"
Or ſtealing ſoft along the chiding brook,
Through flow'ry ſolitudes and pathleſs wilds,
To where the ſhepherd on the mountain brow,

Sits

Sits gaily piping to his ſportive lambs,
Inhaling balmy, pure, ethereal ſoul;
While genial Nature ſmiles, and happy ſees
The roſy-footed May come bluſhing on.

AIR.——BIRKS OF INVERMAY.

RECITATIVE.

And when, attended by the ſultry hours,
Child of the Sun, the lofty *Summer* comes,
How ſweet, by vocal woods and waters lull'd
All on the brink of haunted ſtream, reclin'd
Beneath the beechen ſhade, bleſt Bard! to lie,
And trace the landſkip in thy matchleſs ſong!
Echo thy meadows with the chearful ſound
Of ſharp'ning ſcythe—Wide flies, with fragrant ſmell,
Thy tedded hay—the ſhepherd whets his ſhears,
And drives the fleecy people to the brook.
Loud bleat the hills, and ſtill reſounds the voice
Of happy labour, love, and ſocial glee.
Thund'ring, the cataract, from ſteep to ſteep,
White daſhing, falls for ever in thy ſong.
When Britain's praiſes ſwell thy glorious theme,
Heavens! what a goodly proſpect ſpreads around,
Beyond whate'er immortal Maro ſung
Of fair Italia to her haughty Lords.

Thy

Thy thunder raiſes its tremendous voice,
And bellows Thule through her utmoſt iſles.
Thy lightnings flaſh—and ſtart the gloomy woods.—
From Celadon's embrace, (myſterious Heaven!)
A blacken'd corſe is ſtruck his beauteous maid.

Noon-tide Air.

Recitative.

But chief, when *Autumn* o'er the yellow plain
Comes jovial on, beſide thy reaper train,
With thee in chearful error let us walk
Along the buſy, joy-reſounding fields.
But ſee, with ſmiling patience in her looks,
The lovely gleaner, ſweet Lavinia comes!
Bard of the ſwelling ſoul! 'tis thine to teach
The ſoften'd heart humanity—to melt,
With warm benevolence, the ſordid breaſt.
Now where the ſunny wall empurpled deep
Of baſking orchard, fragrance breathes around,
With thee we meditate in Nature's book:
And when the woodlands raiſe their lateſt ſong,
Amid the gleamings of the gentle days,
With thee we ſteal to ſolitary glooms,
And wooe lone quiet in her ſilent walks;

While

While overhead the ſlowly circling leaf,
Inceſſant falling, ruſtles from the grove.
He comes! he comes! in ev'ry breeze thy *power*
Of philoſophic melancholy comes!

AIR.——HARVEST HOME.

RECITATIVE.

And even when *Winter* rules the varied year,
Sullen, and ſad, THOMSON! with thee well pleas'd,
We ſee the deep fermenting tempeſt brew'd
In the grim evening ſky; while howls the blaſt,
And ſighs the genius of the coming ſtorm.
Wrapt in black glooms and congregated clouds,
The Father of the Tempeſt, dreadful, comes.
—Daſhes the torrent on the mountain's brow,
And roars the river down the ravag'd vale.
But when thy voice thou raiſeſt to the winds,
That, loudly ruſhing, ſhake the ſounding world,
Laſh'd into foam, the fierce conflicting main
Burſts into chaos with tremendous roar.
Varies thy theme.—Thy keener tempeſts come.
Shiv'ring we read.—Saddens the threat'ning eaſt;
The vapoury deluge rolls, to ſnow congeal'd,
And drives inclement o'er the darken'd air.

Earth

Earth buried lies. The ſwain benighted, ſad,
With every tempeſt howling round his head,
The deadly Winter ſeizes.—Stretch'd he lies
A ſtiffen'd corſe, and bleaches in the blaſt.
Stopt in the middle of his headlong courſe,
Faſt grows the river to the ſedgy bank,
A chryſtal pavement, by the icy gale
Cemented firm. Loud rings the frozen earth,
While only ſeems to roar the dumb caſcade.

Pleas'd with thy ſolitary muſe, we ſweep
Along Siberia's unrejoicing wilds:
Sad roams the Ruſſian exile—growls the bear
With dangling ice all horrid.—Still we pierce
Through frozen Greenland to the pole itſelf;
Where grimly ſeated on his icy throne,
The tyrant Winter holds his joyleſs court.

AIR.——BLOW, YE WINTRY WINDS.

RECITATIVE.

While thus, great Bard, thy ſwimming Seaſons glide,
Harmonious rounding ſtill the circling year,
Nor Titian, nor let Raphael dare to vie
With the rich colours of thy glowing verſe.
In many a proſpect, graceful or ſublime,
That unregarded views the vulgar eye,

Still various Nature raptur'd we behold,
And grateful learn her genuine charms to prize:
Still deck'd with flowers, the beauteous graces point
Each faireſt object in its happieſt view.

—While gentle Spring etherial mildneſs breathes;
While lofty Summer brings the ſultry hours;
While gleaming Autumn gilds the happy world;
Or ſurly Winter calls his Ruſſian blaſts,
Shall laſt thy ſong.——
" Never to die! the treaſure of mankind."

AIR.

Raiſe to THOMSON, raiſe the lay,
Hail, with joy, his natal day!
Hail the happy, happy morn!
When great Nature's Bard was born.

See for thee, from regions bright,
Autumn ſheds her golden light!
Libra ſee, ſerene and clear,
Weighs in equal ſcales the year!

AIR.

RECITATIVE.

Nor art thou ſkill'd in rural themes alone,
With bold deſcription, and with manly thought,
To fill the tuneful page.—Bleſt Bard, 'tis thine
To draw the tragic ſcene with juſteſt hand;
To mark the varied movements of the heart:
To melt with pity, or with terror rouſe.
When DIGGES we ſee in TANCRED's fire array'd,
When BELLAMY in SIGISMUNDA's woe,
When SOPHONISBA drains the deadly bowl,
How thrills the inmoſt ſoul; while down the cheek,
Slow ſtealing, falls the gen'rous, heart-ſprung tear!

The key is chang'd—Now with a maſter's hand,
Thou boldly ſweep'ſt along the magic ſtrings
Of gentle SPENCER's wildly warbling harp.
In tranſport ſweet, through *fancy*'s pleaſing maze
With thee we wander o'er the fairy land.
Still in our ears the ſpirits of the wind,
With airy muſic, breathe melodious plaint,
And charm with deep delight the penſive mind.
Now, wizard Indolence, inchanter falſe,
Entices mortal wight with witching ſong;

And now the Knight of Induſtry and Arts,
O'erturns his magic bowers and priſons drear.

While o'er the ruins of imperial Rome,
Thou muſeſt ſad, and ſing'ſt the Britiſh ſong *,
We ſee revolving ages ſweep the earth,
And empires riſe and fall:—how hov'ring o'er
Her much-lov'd Greece, ſad dropt th' indignant tear,
The *power* that whilom bore the *Cap* and *Rod*,
And flying weſtward, ſought th' Heſperian plains;
How there ſhe ſtaid, till on Philippi's field,
Deep dy'd with blood, the laſt of Romans lay;
And how, majeſtic ſtalking o'er the deeps,
Britannia's Genius hail'd the flying *Dame*,
An Iſland Goddeſs now, and fix'd her reign.

SONG.——BRITANNIA.

RECITATIVE.

Hail, friend of mankind! friend of mankind, hail!
Bard of humanity! belov'd of Heav'n!
Thy country's boaſt! whether in fields of light,
High converſe holding with the mighty dead;
Or whether with etherial forms thou ſtrik'ſt,

Amid

* Liberty.

Amid the ſhining throng, the ſilver lyre;
Accept this gratulation which we ſing
In numbers all unequal to the theme.
Light lie the turf, while o'er thy hallow'd grave
Each faireſt, ſweeteſt flower the Muſes ſtrew.

AIR.

Where THOMSON lies, the Muſe around
With flowers ſhall ſtrew the hallow'd ground.
Light lie the turf.—Bleſt Bard! for you
The Muſes ſweeteſt flowers ſhall ſtrew.

RECITATIVE.

'Tis done.—And now this ſocial band ſhall claim,
When ſeventy times the Spring hath green'd the earth,
And ſeventy Harveſts wav'd the yellow head,
Since THOMSON's birth—this gen'rous band ſhall claim
Firſt grateful to have rais'd the ſong of praiſe,
Firſt to have hail'd with joy his natal day.

DUET.

DUET.

Bring the flowers, the laurel bring:
Lovers all of Nature come,
And while Nature's Bard we ſing,
Hang the garland on his tomb.

Loud and ſweet the chorus raiſe,
Swell the note with THOMSON's name,
Worthy he of all our praiſe,
Worthy he our beſt acclaim.

CHORUS.

Raiſe to THOMSON, *raiſe the lay,*
Hail, with joy, his natal day!
Hail the happy, happy morn!
When great Nature's Bard was born.